

ASH WEDNESDAY CALL TO WORSHIP

Blow the trumpet in Zion! Sanctify a fast! Gather the people and call an assembly.

Let us rend not only our clothing, but let us rend our hearts to be made anew and to be cleansed from impurity.

For the day of the Lord is coming, it is near. Even now, the Lord tells us to return with all our heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.

Let us return to the Lord, our God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.

But let us beware of practicing our piety before others in order to be seen by them. Let us pray in secret, immerse ourselves in the inner spiritual disciplines, and commit to faithful discipleship.

We will not just fast, but we shall also pray. We will not only resist temptation; we will also serve our present age.

Fill us with your power, O God, to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, and to let the oppressed go free in this season.

Restore to us the joy of our salvation, and sustain in us a willing spirit. Deliver us, O God, and our tongues shall sing your praises.

from Joel 2, Isaiah 58, and Matthew 6.

